Good morning, Mr. Speaker.

After 4 years, billions of dollars and thousands of lives, President

Bush is once again asking Congress to reward failure with a blank check

for the war in Iraq. Many of my Republican colleagues are more than

willing to give the President anything he wants, but Democrats refuse

to be a rubber stamp for the President's failed policies and, instead,

want to finally require Iraqis to take control of their country. And

yet the President has threatened to

veto legislation that contains his own benchmarks for success in Iraq,

ensures our troops have the training they need, and fully supports both

our veterans and our soldiers wounded in combat.

Our legislation also commits additional funding to fighting the

forgotten war in Afghanistan. Over the last 4 years, the Bush

administration has redirected funds and troops away from Afghanistan,

forgetting that al Qaeda and the Taliban were the ones that attacked

our Nation in 2001.

Mr. Speaker, Democrats will not allow President Bush to continue to

pursue these failed policies. We will insist on a new direction.